

Wilson's Phalarope (*Steganopus tricolor*) at Ocean City, N. J.—To the best of my knowledge the published records of Wilson's Phalarope on the New Jersey coast are limited to two specimens recorded by Dr. C. C. Abbott, as taken at Deal Beach, Monmouth Co. (Birds of New Jersey, in Cooke's Geol. of N. J., 1868). I was never able to trace up these specimens, and the many evident errors in the list in which they are mentioned, naturally casts some doubt on the validity of the record. It is with much pleasure, therefore, that I am able to place on record the capture of a fine adult female of this species by Mr. Gilbert H. Moore, at Ocean City, N. J., May 19, 1898. The bird was in company with a flock of the smaller shore birds when shot.

Mr. Moore has presented the specimen to the local collection of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.—WITMER STONE, *Acad. Nat. Science, Philadelphia, Pa.*

Unusual Nesting Site of Kingbird.—The following may be of some interest to the readers of 'The Auk.' It is certainly unique in my experience. There is a fence post within 50 feet of the Shady Hill Station, Bedford, Mass., and within 35 feet of the railroad, and immediately beside a road, over which men are travelling back and forth all day long, from the office and packing sheds of the Shady Hill Nursery. This post was made of an abandoned railroad tie, whose end had been somewhat hollowed by decay; and in this hollow, in the summer of 1896, a pair of Kingbirds (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) built their nest and raised four young.

One would imagine, judging from the usual characteristics of the Kingbirds, that this pair might have been in constant trouble; but Messrs. A. H. Kirkland, of the Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture, and E. L. Beard, President of the Shady Hill Nursery, to whom I am indebted for this information, seem to be under the impression that, all things considered, they got on very well. The top of the post was only about four feet above the ground, and being immediately beside the road, was, of course, a matter of some interest to the passers-by; but as orders had been issued by Mr. Beard to his numerous workmen, not to have the nest disturbed, the old ones were able to bring them up.

I have no date except that of June 9, 1896, given me by Mr. Kirkland, at which time, he writes me, the nest "contained four young."

Mr. Beard is responsible for the information that on days of extreme heat, the old birds could often be seen standing over their young, and with vibrating wings, sheltering and cooling them.—FRED H. KENNARD, — *Boston, Mass.*

Early Arrival of the Kingbird at Cambridge, Mass.—I saw a Kingbird Saturday, April 16, in my yard. I suppose it is a very unusual date for the arrival of *Tyrannus tyrannus*. It has been seen there eleven other days; from the 23d to the 29th of April it was cold and rainy with north-east winds during which the bird was not seen.

I suppose it is the same Kingbird which, with another, nests near by.—
THOMAS B. BERGEN, *Cambridge, Mass.*

Habits of the Blue Jay.—It may be of interest to the readers of 'The Auk' to learn that I can add, what is to me, a new bird to the list of those making their nests in or about buildings. We have a pair of Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*) in Brookline, Mass., that have this year built their nest in a most conspicuous place, between the stems of a Wistaria vine and the capitol of a pillar, supporting a piazza roof. This piazza is in almost daily use, and the path leading immediately beside it is also used constantly. At the time of building, and even on June 3, when I saw the nest full of young ones, there were no leaves in the immediate vicinity to hide the nest, thus leaving it in a very conspicuous position.

We all know that certain birds change their habits in accordance with the march of civilization, and I was not very much surprised a few years ago, when I knew of a Blue Jay building its nest in a maple tree, immediately beside our town hall, in the heart of the town; but I was surprised at the above incident, and thought that it might be of interest to others.—
FRED H. KENNARD, *Boston, Mass.*

Probable Polygamy of the Great-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus macrourus*).—As evidence bearing upon the supposed polygamy of the Great-tailed Grackle, some observations made at Orizaba, Mexico, in March, 1897, seem worthy of record. This species is an abundant bird in many Mexican cities, finding in the plazas or parks suitable feeding and breeding grounds. In the small *Zocalo* or public gardens in the heart of the City of Orizaba, it happened that only one tree, a densely foliaged conifer, was available for nesting sites, and as an apparent result the gardens were inhabited by only one family of Grackles. I watched these birds for some time on March 15 and 16, seeing ten or twelve females, but only one male. The former were building; and on one occasion I saw at least six different females bring nesting materials into the coniferous tree at intervals. This tree contained several nests; how many it was not possible to determine, from the path at its base, and its isolation, in connection with the facts I have mentioned, lead me to believe that it constituted the harem of the male who generally perched in an adjoining araucaria, assuming the ridiculously conscious pose so characteristic of this species.—
FRANK M. CHAPMAN, *American Museum of Natural History, New York City.*

McKay's Snowflake (*Plectrophenax hyperboreus*) at Bethel, Alaska.—Two specimens of this rare bird were recently sent me from Bethel, ninety miles up the Kuskokwim River, in the western part of Alaska. This is probably the farthest inland at which the bird has yet been found. The specimens, both females, in full winter plumage, were taken Jan. 4, 1898.—
WITMER STONE, *Acad. Nat. Sciences, Philadelphia, Pa.*